

Craft Technique Documentary

HAKUJI

The Art of INOUE Manji



White porcelain is commonly used by modern Arita potters as a base on which to apply colorful motifs or red *Akae* overglaze. In contrast, INOUE Manji strives to bring out the true beauty of white porcelain, a beauty which requires no surface ornamentation.

This DVD about INOUE follows the artist's creative process as he makes a flower-shaped white porcelain bowl with a wheat motif.

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Prologue

White porcelain is a traditional kind of pottery made by applying a clear glaze to the porcelain clay called *jido* and firing it at a high temperature. This technique was pioneered in China around the 6th century. A thousand years or so later, at the beginning of the Edo period, it had traveled via the Korean Peninsula to reach the Japanese region of Arita.



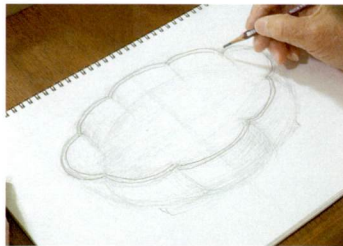
INOUE's White Porcelain

In 1995, at the age of 66, INOUE Manji was recognized as the holder of an Important Intangible Cultural Property by the government of Japan.



Arita and INOUE's Kiln

INOUE Manji's kiln is in the Nangawara district of Arita in Saga Prefecture, southern Japan.



Creating the Concept

INOUE has come up with a concept for his next piece—a flower-shaped bowl with eight petals.



Mixing the Clay

Currently, INOUE uses clay made from pottery stone found in Amakusa, in Kumamoto Prefecture.



Kneading the Clay

First, he kneads the clay. This step must be done thoroughly, or air remaining in the clay will make holes in the fired piece.



Forming the Flower-Shaped Bowl

INOUE uses a potter's wheel to throw the flower-shaped bowl. Porcelain clay is composed of very fine, hard particles. So it takes strength to draw up the clay.



Biography

INOUE was born in 1929, the fourth son of an Arita ceramics potter. At age 16, he apprenticed himself to master potter SAKAIDA Kakiemon the 12th and embarked on his career as a ceramic artisan.



Using Spatulas

Tools such as *binbera* and *oshibera* spatulas are used to form the shape.



Forming the Rim

Excess clay is cut away to form the rim of the bowl. To make a flower-shaped bowl, the first step is to make a round bowl.



Fixing Distortion

After forming the round bowl, he sets it aside for two days to dry and harden slightly. Then he puts it on the wheel again and fixes any distortion as he gradually forms the floral shape.



Forming the Flower-Shaped Bowl

He makes marks on the lip of the bowl and uses his index finger to make indentions in the clay. He then adds additional clay to reinforce the indented portions.



Fine-Tuning the Shape with *Kensaki*

Once the flower shape has been formed, he uses a tool called a *kensaki* to shave down the lip and give it a clean line.



Drying and Carving off Excess

The completed bowl is allowed to dry completely, after which excess material, such as the foot support, is shaved away.

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Special Thanks

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The craftsmen of the INOUE Manji kiln

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Film Processing IMAGICA

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Additional Voice GJERDE Barry



Engraving a Wheat Motif

Using hand-made tools, he carves a wheat design on the inside of the bowl, which is then given a bisque firing.



Accentuating the Design with *Cobalt-blue*

Before applying the glaze, the wheat engraving is given a thin coat of *cobalt-blue* to make it stand out more clearly.



Applying the Glaze

White porcelain glaze is made of feldspar and limestone. The glaze is first applied to the inside of the bowl and then the outside.



Firing

Firing is done in a gas-fired reduction kiln. The temperature is slowly raised over a day and a night to 1,300 degrees Celsius.



Unloading the Kiln

Four days after firing, the kiln is unloaded.



Flower-Shaped White Porcelain Bowl with a Wheat Motif

The bluish wheat motif adds a subtle accent to the pure white porcelain. This bowl reflects the warmth and expressiveness of INOUE's personality.



INOUE Manji Born 1929, in Saga Prefecture. After training with SAKAIDA Kakiemon the 12th and OKUGAWA Chu'uemon the 1st, he joined the Saga Ceramics Research Laboratory and worked on developing new forming techniques, glazes and designs for porcelain, mastering traditional techniques for creating exquisite white porcelain. The recipient of numerous awards at the annual Japanese Traditional Arts Crafts Exhibition, he has created many quality works and frequently holds exhibitions both in Japan and abroad. He continues to work energetically, and also dedicates much of his time to teaching aspiring potters in Japan and overseas. He has wide experience in researching and teaching overseas at institutions such as the Pennsylvania State University in the United States. In 1995, he was recognized as a holder of the Important Intangible Cultural Property "white porcelain". In 1997, he was awarded the Medal with Purple Ribbon and in 2003, the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon.